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gentleman who wished to examine the *Ogham* inscription. Subsequently he had also assisted in putting it on edge, as it now stands; and that in so doing, the angle inscribed with the *Ogham* was buried in the earth. It at once occurred to them, that this gentleman could have been none else than Mr. Hitchcock, whose researches in connexion with this branch of Irish antiquities, are well known. Mr. Graves accordingly communicated with the Rev. Charles Graves, D.D., of Trinity College, Dublin, on the subject, and shortly afterwards received a letter from Mr. Hitchcock, stating that, by direction of Dr. Graves, he had visited the stone on the 18th of the previous July, but owing to the existence of a crop of wheat in the field, he could do nothing towards raising it for examination on that occasion. Mr. Hitchcock again visited the locality on the 20th of December, when it required the aid of nearly twenty men to turn over this immense *Dallan* (*Dallan*), which measures nearly twelve feet in length, by six feet in breadth, and is upwards of one foot thick. It was doubtful whether the stone was first thrown down by *money-seekers*, or by the Ordnance Survey people. Mr. Hitchcock also communicated, by Dr. Graves' desire, the existence of another *Ogham* stone in Gowran church-yard, also in the County of Kilkenny; unfortunately, the inscriptions on both of these monuments were imperfect; they had been engraved for Dr. Graves, and would shortly appear in his treatise on the *Ogham* writing, which was in course of preparation.

It should be recorded, that Sir Richard Langrishe, Bart., the lord of the soil, has prevented—to his honor be it told—the destruction of the Ballyboodan *Ogham* stone, as his tenant wished to break it up, in order to its removal from the field, where he considered it an impediment to the plough. Every lover of antiquity should deplore so barbarous and unnecessary an act, had it been carried into execution.

FOLK - LORE.

NO. I.

BY MR. NICHOLAS O'KEARNEY.

[*Read at the Meeting of May 1st.*]

I must not conceal that I am rejoiced to learn that such an institution as the Kilkenny Archæological Society has sprung into existence, the more especially since I long felt the necessity of such a Society in every county throughout Ireland; were such a Society only to preserve a portion of the local history and prevailing popular traditions, it would be doing a great deal for Ireland; because the history of our country

is imperfectly known, and must remain so for ever in the absence of a knowledge of our prevailing traditions. The traditions and singular customs of the Irish people are of the utmost value to the historian, not merely because snatches of local history may be found among them, but because they reflect much more light on the mythology of ancient Ireland than is generally believed. We have no special written history of the old religion of Ireland, at least none universally acknowledged as such; perhaps the laudable zeal of our early Christian missionaries consigned such records to the dust for the best end, as they did out of the purest motives; but there still remained in the hearts of the people some lingering fondness for the forms of worship to which they had been accustomed, which, notwithstanding their zeal for the promotion of the doctrines of truth, since a nation could not be simultaneously converted, they kept in mind by the craft of heterodox agency; and these being handed down from sire to son, formed the basis of our wild and seemingly meaningless traditions and legends. The sticklers for Paganism certainly did a great deal to keep alive those reminiscences under pretence of their necessity for the welfare of the people, and the preservation of their property from supernatural evils. Just as we find the class of the Irish Fakeers, the *Bacachs* (*Bacachs*), have done, and still do, despite the vigilance and exertions of the clergy. The *Bacachs*, I suspect, are the successors of the old faction of Pagan religionists who once kept their tenets in preservation among the people, and who have been found in every age and in all parts of the country teaching error through interested motives. The reliques of our Pagan rites have formed the Koran of our charm-mongers, herb-doctors, and other cunning persons, who contrive to keep considerable remnants of Paganism in respectable vogue. From those sources the Kilkenny Archæological Society can glean much important information. Besides the superstitions kept alive by charm-mongers, &c., there are other anti-Christian customs still prevalent, the origin of which cannot be mistaken; such are the bonfires, or Baal-fires, lighted on the eve of Midsummer—except in and around Dublin, where they are still held on *Oíðche Bhealltaine* (*Oíðche Bhealltaine*), or May-eve—May-poles and bushes, evident types of the Lingam; the respect, bordering on veneration, had for Wells, and *leacs* (*leacs*), especially the upright ones; the reluctance always exhibited to light fires early, on the mornings of May-day and *Samhain*, lest some evil might befall their black cattle; the offering or pouring at the foot of a solitary thorn—if growing on a fort or hill so much the better—the first portion of *Gruth Buidhe* (*Gruth Buidhe*), or beestings of cows, the prevalent notion relative to the existence of the *Dæine-sighe* (*Dæine-sighe*) or fairies; these and a thousand more strange customs are worth being investigated and compared with the mythology of other countries, especially that of the East. There is one custom which I found practised by a family moving in a very respectable sphere, and which I am informed was not long ago, probably still is, practised in the County of Kilkenny, and to which I wish to call your attention, because it

appears to me to savour of Paganism of the rankest kind.* On the eve of Twelfth day a large loaf called the "Christmas Loaf," which is usually baked some days previously, is laid with great solemnity on the table; the doors and windows are closed and strongly bolted; and one of the family, generally the housewife, then takes the loaf, and pounding it against the closed doors, &c., repeats three times, in Irish, the following *Rann* (*Rann*):—

Ḥóḡnamuḡḡ an ḡorṡa,
 Amaḡ ḡo cṡṡ na ḡ-Turcaḡ;
 O ḡoḡṡ ḡo blṡṡḡḡḡ o ḡoḡṡ,
 Aḡur o ḡoḡṡ fṡḡḡ amaḡ.

We warn famine to retire,
 To the country of the Turks;
 From this night to this night twelvemonth,
 And even this very night.

The word *Turcaḡ*, however, appears to be of mediæval introduction. I have a strong notion that the charm, &c., are relics of moon-rites once prevalent in Ireland, similar to those rites performed by the women of Israel while in Egypt. The custom itself would appear to be of Eastern or Egyptian origin, vide *Jerem.*, cap. xlv., v. 18, 19. Vallancey asserts that the Irish were wont to bake cakes and offer them to the Queen of Heaven, or the moon, in the month of February, possibly with the view of obtaining her influence to ward off famine, and to preserve them from the enemy's sword, like the Israelitish women: and it may not be going at too hasty a pace to suspect something analogous in our present custom of baking pan-cakes on Shrove Tuesday, if not in the Kilkenny one of the "Christmas Loaf," with that of the ancient Egyptians and Irish. It is, indeed, reasonable to suppose that sacrifices had been offered to the moon at that particular period of the year, the season of her dignity, utility and splendour. Next in point of historical value to our traditional and historical legends, are our written romances. These are generally looked on as the merest meaningless fictions ever penned, but close application will at once betray and unmask them, and point them out as a portion of our Pagan traditions, taken down in writing at a comparatively modern period, and their very imperfectly understood mythological portions are those absurd fables, not however more ridiculous than those related in every mythic history which we know. The Bovine legends, prevailing still among the old people, and the numerous topographical terms connected with this species of animal, go far towards supporting the opinion, that in Ireland, as in Egypt, they had their sacred bulls. I have been carefully perusing the supposed historical fiction styled

* This custom is also prevalent in the South of Ireland. *Eds.*

Ἐἰν Βό Ὀυἰλγνε (*Tain Bo Cuailgne*), and cannot perceive any other reason for the seven-years' war between Connaught and Ulster, than a violent religious struggle to obtain possession of the extraordinary bull called the Ὀνν-Ὀυἰλγνε (*Donn-Cuailgne*), which must have been one of those sacred animals; the animal was protected by *Cuchulainn*, its *cu*, *kuon*, Hercules, or priest. I need make no suggestion relative to *Baal*, *Crom*, *Diarmuid*, *Grainne*, &c., because the names are familiar to every antiquary, and I doubt not, but much information concerning them can be still had from the people. There is, however, one mythic being who still holds sway in popular tradition, especially on the N. E. sea coasts, more so contiguous to Ὀύν-Ἀἰνε (*Dun Aine*), Dunany, and, I believe, in other places where she once had a fane; I mean, *Aine*, who appears to be the Anna, or Anec of the Carthaginians, invoked by Hanno in Plautus,* the Anna Perenna of the Latins, the Ὀἰᾶ-Ἀἰνε (*Dia-Aine*) Diana, of European mythology, &c. She also appears to be the same as Selene, or the Moon, the Ḫēlīle (*Sheeli*) of the Irish, whose images, nearly in the same form with the ancient statues of the Egyptian Isis as given by Dr. Pococke, are still found, especially the celebrated one which the *Bacachs* of Ballyvourney, in the County of Cork, hold up to the people as the image of *St. Gobnait*, and thereby drive on a profitable traffic, as being an object possessed of extraordinary power. Dragon or serpent-worship must unquestionably have been once prevalent in this country, since we find so many traditions and notices in our romances relative to Πἰᾱστᾱἰῆς (*Piasts*) or serpents, one of which is said to have once resided in every lake and creek of any note. This species of *Cultus* would appear, at least to me, to belong to that of Ἰῆρ (*Iir*), the Irish *Poseidon*.

* The co-incidence of the Irish, with this supposed relic of the Phœnician, language is a very significant fact :—

“ Et te se ANECHE	nasotelia	elicos	alemus	dubterter
Ἀνῆρ τε-ῖᾱ Ἀἰνε	ἡᾱῖῖ-cella	ελῖκῖῖῖ	ᾱῖᾱῖῖ	duberte
And thou, O Aine,	bond-sever,	I charge	foster-mother	earnest-prayer
mi comps	vespiti.”			
ῖῖᾱῖῖ	ῖῖῖ-ḃῖῖ			
my gentle	just being.			

Pœnulus, Act. V. Scena I ver. 15.

ADDENDUM.

Page 229, after last line add—

Since the foregoing was in print I have been informed by the Rev. James Graves, that Ledwich has committed a twofold mistake in stating that the "*Sacri Lus*" was lost, and that the poems were composed by the young gentlemen of Kilkenny College. The volume in question is still to be found in Primate Marsh's Library, Class K. 3. Tab. 5. No. 9; and is entitled "*Sacri Lus* *In Vsum* Scholæ Kilkenniensis. Dublinii: Typis Regiis, & Venum dantur apud Josephum Wilde. c1o locL. * * *". The date is defective, having been partly cut away by the binder. The book is in small quarto, and is imperfect, ending at p. 64; it consists of Latin poetry in elegiac measure, chiefly on Scripture subjects. On the fly-leaf is written, in an old hand, "Daniel Mead, ex dono Geo. Pigott." On the title, "Mich. Jephson"; whose library was purchased by Primate Marsh.

CORRIGENDA.

- p. 117, l. 8, for "Anglesea" read "Anglesea".
- p. 133, l. 27, for "these" read "those".
- p. 142, l. 34, for "of" read "of".
- p. 148, note, l. 1, after "Phœnician" dele „.
- p. 157, l. 17, for "*Muillend*" read "*Muilend*".
- ib., l. 24, for "*Maelodron*" read "*Maelodran*".
- p. 164, l. 11, for "*Muilenu*" read "*Muilenn*".
- p. 174, l. 35, for "connection" read "connexion".
- p. 177, l. 9, for "*barry of four*" read "*four barrulets*".
- p. 182, l. 27, for "Edward" read "Edmond".
- p. 187, l. 31, for "twenty-four" read "fourteen".
- p. 191, l. 27, after "of" insert "the".
- p. 192, l. 37, after "tenure" dele „.
- p. 193, ll. 44, 45, for "two trefoil-headed niches" read "a shallow canopy".
- p. 195, ll. 14, 22, for "Sugard" read "Ingard".
- p. 198, l. 8, for "acre" read "Loftus acre".
- ib., l. 18, for "Ballymagin" read "Ballymagir".
- p. 200, l. 9, after "rain" dele „.
- p. 213, l. 39, for "meta" read "metal".
- p. 216, l. 34, for "Vol. I." read "Vol. II".
- ib., l. 35, for "*luaned*" read "*luued*".
- p. 222, l. 15, for "magnificent" read "magnificent".
- p. 240, l. 39, after "brothers" dele „.
- p. 260, l. 32, for "of Nassau" read "daughter of the first Duke of Beaufort".